

Application No.: 09/437378

Docket No.: OIQ-001RCE

REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 9-13, 15-24 and 27-38 are presently pending in the application of which claims 1, 6, 9, 17, 19, 22 and 27 are independent.

Summary of Telephonic Interviews

Applicants' attorney thanks the Examiner for the courtesy of the telephonic interviews on September 6, 2005 and September 8, 2005. Applicants' attorney and the Examiner discussed the pending claims and the cited reference Ikudome. The Examiner and Applicants' attorney agreed that the addition of a claim element indicating that the identification of the redirection facility was based on information in the received user-supplied information and that the user-supplied information was not received before the receipt of the request to access information provided a distinguishing factor over Ikudome which relies on pre-defined rule sets and packet filtering of all outgoing traffic.

Claim Rejections Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1, 2, 4, 9, 11-13, 15, 18-20, 22, 24 and 27-33 were rejected by the Examiner pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ikudome et al. (United States Patent No. 6, 779, 118 B1, hereafter "Ikudome") in view of Ferguson et al (United States Patent No.: 5, 819, 092, hereafter "Ferguson"). For the reasons set forth below, those rejections are respectfully traversed.

Summary of Claimed Invention

The claimed invention provides a mechanism for a hyperlink associated with a semantic value to be resolved based on a user-supplied preference to retrieve digital objects. For example, if a user that clicks on a hyperlink referencing certain content has access to both subscription-based services and non-subscription based services, the user determines which of the services is to be used in resolving the hyperlink to one or more resources for the content. On the other hand, where a user does not subscribe to a subscription-based service, the hyperlink may be resolved by non-subscription-based services when the user clicks on the hyperlink. The user-

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supplied preference enables a hyperlink to be resolved differently based upon whether the user has access to subscription-based services and/or non-subscription-based services.

The claimed invention provides a controlled vocabulary that is used to specify a unique variety of hyperlink. The hyperlink contains a semantic value and a uniform resource locator (URL). The URL is not for a service provided to resolve the hyperlink, but rather refers to a hyperlink redirection facility. The hyperlink redirection facility receives user-supplied information regarding user preferences for resolution services (in one implementation through the use of a cookie). The hyperlink redirection facility modifies the original request to take into account the user preference and returns the modified request to the user for forwarding to a service provider for request resolution. The service provider receives the modified request and directs the request to a resolution facility that provides resources, such as search results. The resources are then returned to the user by the service provider.

Summary of Ikudome

Ikudome discusses a data redirection system for redirecting a user's data based on a stored rule set. The Ikudome system describes the use of a redirection server which enforces a rule set associated with a particular user ID. The redirection server is informed of the IP address assigned to a user for a particular session. The redirection server sits between the user and the Internet or some other network and filters packets. Actions performed by the redirection server based on the rule set associated with the user include restricting the amount of time a user can access certain web sites, blocking access to web sites, and providing redirection away from a requested web site to a different web site by providing redirection information embedded in a web page to the user's browser.

Summary of Ferguson

Ferguson discusses a visual editing system for creating commercial online computer services. The editing system creates services which have a number of subservices. One of the subservices described in Ferguson is for a hyperlink editor subtool. The hyperlink editor subtool allows a developer to assign attributes to hyperlinks. One of the available attributes is a semantics attribute which allows additional structure in the online service (see col. 26).

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Argument

The combination of Ikudome in view of Ferguson fails to teach or suggest all of the elements of Applicants' independent claims 1, 9, 19, 22 and 27. Accordingly, the combination of references also fails to teach or suggest all of the elements of claims 2, 4, 11-13, 15, 18, 20, 24 and 28-33 which are dependent on claims 1, 9, 19, 22 and 27.

Applicants have amended all of the independent claims to clarify that the user supplied information/preference is the basis for the identification of the service provider used to service the request and that the user-supplied information/preference is received contemporaneously or following the receipt of the request to access information/resource request (as discussed with the Examiner). This element is lacking in Ikudome which relies on pre-defined rule sets (from a system administrator) and packet filtering.

Additionally, Applicants respectfully suggest that Ikudome lacks the user-supplied preference/user-supplied information limitation required by Applicants' independent claims. The system of Ikudome attempts to control a user's access to the Internet (or some other network) by applying a rule set to the user's resource requests. Ikudome's system works by filtering outgoing packet requests which are then either allowed, denied, redirected or otherwise altered. The action taken by the redirection server in Ikudome is controlled by a rule set that is retrieved from a database. The rule set is associated with a user (or group of users) and provided to the redirection server following the authentication of the user. There is absolutely nothing in Ikudome to indicate that the rule set associated with the user is supplied by the user, and a review of Ikudome suggests it would be a system administrator that would provide the rule sets for the user or groups of users. The user provides a user ID as part of the authentication process but is not supplying the rule set. As part of the authentication of the user, an IP address is assigned to the authenticated user and the IP address is provided to the redirection server along with the rule set. The redirection server then performs packet filtering of all requests bearing the IP address of the user and applies the applicable rule from the rule set. In contrast, claim 1 of the present invention requires "identifying a user-supplied preference regarding which service provider to use to service the request" with the user-supplied preference being identified at the hyperlink redirection facility. An exemplary manner of supplying this preference is via the use

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of a cookie which is transmitted along with the request generated from the user's selection of a controlled vocabulary hyperlink (see page 4, lines 24-26 of the present application) to the redirection server. It is the user that supplies the preference for a request, not some third party. Ferguson also lacks this missing user-supplied preference/user-supplied information limitation.

Additionally, the method of claim 1, and the corresponding medium claim 19, also include the limitation of a user selection of a controlled vocabulary abstract hyperlink that includes a semantic value and an URL address of a hyperlink redirection facility. Applicants respectfully suggest that Ikudome teaches away from the inclusion of an URL address of a hyperlink redirection facility in a user-selectable hyperlink.

The Office Action of April 8, 2005 cites a location in Ikudome where the Examiner suggests the limitation regarding the user selection of the URL containing the address of the redirection server may be found. However, the cited section of Ikudome col. 1, line 49 (see paragraph 2 on page 2 of Office Action), is the background section discussing a user selection of a generic hyperlink, not a controlled vocabulary abstract hyperlink with the URL of the redirection server embedded within the hyperlink. The claimed invention requires the affirmative selection by a user of the controlled vocabulary abstract hyperlink which includes the URL address of the redirection server. The system described in Ikudome does not require or use the selection of a hyperlink embedded with the URL of the redirection server (by the user) before the redirection server redirects the request. Rather, the redirection server in Ikudome is monitoring all outgoing requests and performing packet filtering for messages with selected IP addresses in the header. Put another way, Ikudome routes everything through the redirection server which is located between the user and the network. Since all messages/requests are already going through the redirection server, there is no need to embed the URL address of the redirection server in a user-selectable hyperlink. Ferguson also does not discuss including the redirection facility URL in the controlled vocabulary abstract hyperlink.

The combination of references thus fails to disclose the use of a controlled vocabulary abstract hyperlink that includes the URL of the redirection facility/server and its components as required by independent claims 1 and 19 (and the claims dependent thereon). Accordingly,

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Applicants request the withdrawal of the rejections directed to independent claims 1 and 19 (and the claims dependent thereon).

Independent claim 9, and the corresponding medium claim 22, similarly includes claim elements that are neither taught nor suggested by the combination of Ikudome in view of Ferguson. The claims require the receipt of user-supplied information as well as the use of link information that includes an URL address of the hyperlink redirection facility. As noted above, the Examiner-suggested combination fails to include these elements. Accordingly, Applicants request the withdrawal of the rejections directed to independent claims 9 and 22 (and the claims dependent thereon).

Likewise, independent claim 27 also includes the identification of a user-supplied preference. As set forth above, this element is neither taught nor suggested by the Examiner-cited combination of Ikudome in view of Ferguson. Accordingly, Applicants request the withdrawal of the rejections directed to independent claim 27 (and the claims dependent thereon).

Dependent claims 3, 10, 21 and 23 were rejected by the Examiner pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ikudome in view of Ferguson in further view of Ebrahim (United States Patent Number 6, 154, 777). For the reasons set forth below, those rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Examiner cited Ebrahim as teaching the communication of a cookie. However, claims 3, 10, 21 and 23 are all dependent upon the respective independent claims discussed above and Ebrahim fails to teach or suggest the limitations missing from Ikudome and Ferguson. Accordingly, Applicants request the withdrawal of the rejections directed to claims 3, 10, 21 and 23.

Claims 5, 6 and 16 were rejected by the Examiner pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ikudome in view of Ferguson in further view of Kenner (United States Patent Number 6, 112, 239). For the reasons set forth below, those rejections are respectfully traversed.

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The Examiner cited Kenner as teaching the use of a second service provider that is used to service the request when the service provider fails to fully service the request. However, dependent claims 5 and 16 are dependent upon the independent claims 1 and 9 respectively which were discussed above and Kenner fails to teach or suggest the limitations missing from Ikudome and Ferguson. Independent claim 6 includes the claim element of identifying a user-supplied preference regarding which service provider to use to service the request. As discussed previously, this element is missing from the combination of Ikudome and Ferguson. It is also missing from Kenner. Accordingly, Applicants request the withdrawal of the rejections directed to claims 5, 6 and 16.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendment, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Applicants believe a two month extension fee in the amount of \$225.00 is due with this statement in addition to the fee for the Request for Continued Examination. However, if an additional fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 12-0080, under Order No. OIQ-001RCE from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: September 8, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

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